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A FAREWELL-SERMON,

DESIGNED

FOR THE WELL-BELOVED

PARISHONERS

OF

BALLYCULTER;

ON THE REMOVAL OF THEIR

PERSECUTED MINISTER

EDWARD SMYTH.

The SECOND EDITION.

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FAREWELL-SERMON, &c.

2 Cor. xiii. 14.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, *and the love of* God, *and the communion of the* Holy Ghost *be with you all. Amen.*

At the beginning, and end, of moſt of the Epiſtles, we find the firſt Preachers of the goſpel uſing this mode of prayer, or one of ſimilar import, as they could wiſh for no bleſſings higher than it contains. All *the treaſures* that *are hid* in the ever-bleſſed Trinity are here comprized; and, therefore, almoſt each diſtinct ſervice of the Church of England is concluded with this apoſtolic benediction.

But, would to God, that all thoſe who pronounce it with their *lips*, knew its full meaning in their *hearts*, and felt its efficacious power, *working in them both to will and to do of* God's *good pleaſure!* We ſhould then no longer hear *Wolves in Sheep's*

cloathing declaiming againſt faithful *Shepherds* as enthuſiaſtic madmen, who experience in their own ſouls it's divine energy; and would, therefore, gladly invite others to be partakers of the ſame rich conſolation. Were their *inward parts* ſenſible of what their *tongues* utter, how zealouſly would they propogate the everlaſting goſpel—the good news, proclaiming *glory to* GOD *in the higheſt, on earth peace, good will towards men.* Unwearied would they cry out to their hearers, *Come, and I will tell you what the* LORD *hath done for my ſoul—Come, and I will ſhew you a man,* who hath *caſt all My ſins behind his back—Is not this the* CHRIST, *the* SAVIOUR *of the world?* Come, then, *my dearly-beloved, my longed-for, taſte, and ſee how gracious the* LORD *is.*

Oh, *how beautiful upon the mountains* would be *the feet of him that would bring ſuch glad tidings of great joy!* How ſoon would *righteouſneſs* begin to *cover the face of the earth!* But, alas! being deſtitute themſelves of all vital godlineſs, and not feeling *the goſpel* to be *the power of* GOD *unto their* own *ſalvation*, they, and their poor deluded hearers, are content to ſtarve on the *huſk* of Religion, while others feed upon the *kernel*, and are nouriſhed unto eternal life. How abaſhed, how confounded, muſt they appear before the awful tribunal of the LORD JESUS, when he will ſay unto each of them, "*Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked Servant*—Often haſt thou prayed "that my *grace*, the *love* of my FATHER, and "*the fellowſhip of the* HOLY GHOST, might be "with thyſelf, and thy congregation, when, at the "ſame time, thou didſt neither enjoy this ſpiritual "communion with us, nor even believed it attainable. Therefore, *bind the hypocrite, and caſt him* "*into outer darkneſs, where ſhall be weeping, and wailing,*

" wailing, and gnashing of teeth." May every thoughtless *hireling*, of every denomination, earnestly deprecate this heavy judgment, before it be irreversibly pronounced upon him!

As for me, my dear Brethren, *yourselves are witnesses* how frequently, how fervently I have called upon you, and importuned you, to seek *the grace of* GOD *which bringeth salvation*. Warmly and pressingly have I wooed for CHRIST, that I might *present you* to the heavenly BRIDEGROOM, *as a pure and chaste virgin*. With all the solicitude of tender love, yea, *as in* CHRIST's *stead*, have I besought you to *be reconciled unto* GOD, that ye might receive the remission of all your sins. I have not only *taught you to observe all things whatsoever* CHRIST *hath commanded you*, but have also directed you to that power, even *the Spirit of grace*, by which alone ye could be enabled to *fulfil all righteousness*; daily *exhorting, and charging every one of you, that ye would walk worthy of* GOD, *whose name is* HOLY.

When first appointed over you, as I had *a zeal for* GOD and your souls, tho' *not according to knowledge*, some of my present enemies *received me as an angel of* GOD; so that, as St. *Paul* says of the *Galatians, if it had been possible, I doubt not but they would have plucked out their own eyes, and have given them to me.* But when I began to discover more fully, by the light of GOD's word, that *the whole world* was *lying in wickedness*, and accordingly *testified that their deeds were evil*, then (as *Jeremiah* complains) *I heard the defaming of many —report, said they, and we will report it again.* When I brought the the threatnings of GOD home to every conscience, and told *the wicked* that the LORD would *rain snares, fire, and brimstone, and an*

horrible tempeſt upon them, I was then *ſhamefully entreated*. Urged by the example, and intimidated by the diſpleaſure of a certain GREAT man, even many of *my own familiars put their hands with the wicked to be unrighteous witneſſes againſt me*. As they had *no intention* to injure me, but, on account of *the fury of the oppreſſor who was ready to deſtroy*, were prevailed on to ſubſcribe with their hands what their hearts diſapproved of, I truſt that the LORD will give them unfeigned repentance, and in mercy wink at their ignorance.

But oh, my friends, where was your faith? Hath not CHRIST ſaid, *Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and, after that, have no more that they can do: But I will forewarn you whom you ſhall fear —fear* HIM, *who, after he hath killed, hath power to caſt into Hell: Yea, I ſay unto you, fear him?* If GOD ſhould ſuffer your *houſes and lands* to be taken from you, conſider the diſpenſation as a trial of your faith, and, with the HEBREWS, *joyfully take the ſpoiling of your goods*. They that *know in themſelves that they have in heaven a better, and an enduring, ſubſtance*, will leave (when called to it) *houſes and lands, brethren and ſiſters, fathers and mothers, wife and children for* CHRIST'S *ſake, and the Goſpel's*. And wherefore ſhould any of you doubt the goodneſs of that GOD who provideth for *the ravens of the field?* Are not *the* very *hairs of your head all numbered?* Why, then, are ye ſo *ſlow of heart to believe?* Oh, take GOD at his word, HE is the *faithful and true witneſs*: And if ye *ſeek firſt his kingdom and his righteouſneſs, all things* neceſſary for this preſent life *ſhall be added unto you. Put not your truſt in princes, nor in any ſon of man, whoſe breath is in his noſtrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of? But ſanctify the* LORD *of*

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hoſts himſelf, and let HIM *be your fear, and let* HIM *be your dread.*

As for the few who *ſeek my hurt, and ſpeak miſchievous things againſt me,* may a long-ſuffering GOD turn their hearts to *the acknowledging of the truth!* O LORD, *lay not this ſin to their charge!* Reader, art thou one of them? *Come and let us reaſon together.* Why art thou offended? Let me anſwer for thee. I plainly declared that GOD *was angry with the wicked every day,* and that *his face was againſt them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.* I ſaid, *Thou art the man.* But was I *your enemy becauſe I told you the truth?* No, ſurely—Weigh matters well, and you will find I have been your trueſt friend. *Knowing the terrors* of that GOD, who, out of CHRIST, *is a conſuming fire,* I would willingly have perſuaded you to *flee from the wrath to come, and find reſt unto your ſouls* in the wounds of a crucified SAVIOUR. Tho' I might have been *rude in ſpeech, yet* (to GOD be all the glory) *not in knowledge:* And it was neceſſary to *uſe plainneſs of ſpeech;* in order to ſave your ſouls. *Is not my word* (ſays GOD) *like as a fire, or as a hammer, that breaketh the rock in pieces?* Now, if this word be not *handled deceitfully,* but is preached in its full meaning and extent, it will *humble* Sinners *under the mighty hand of* GOD. They muſt firſt be broken down, and the ſandy foundation of their former hopes deſtroyed, before they can be built upon the ROCK *of ages*—They muſt be wounded by the SPIRIT of GOD, *convincing them of ſin,* before they can be healed by the ſaving name of JESUS—They muſt receive *the ſentence of death* in themſelves, before they can be reſtored to ſpiritual life—They muſt be made ſenſible that they are, by nature and practice, children of the Devil, and bond-ſlaves of hell, before they

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can be made *children of* GOD, and *fellow-citizens with the saints*. In order, therefore, that you might be numbered with those of the *houshold of faith*, and become *coheirs with the* LORD JESUS CHRIST, it was my duty boldly to testify that GOD had *concluded you under sin* and unbelief, that ye might be *justified through the redemption that is in* CHRIST. And herein I dealt with you not only *as one that must give an account*, but also, as a faithful lover of your souls.

When a surgeon would heal an ulcerated member, he must begin by drawing off all the inward corruption. If he attempts to skin over the putrid wound, without first thoroughly cleansing it, he shews his want both of skill and charity. Tho' he should seemingly effect a cure, yet, in a short time, the issue will break out again with redoubled force —the contagion will spread through the whole body —applications prove inavailable—and the deceived patient, perhaps, die in the utmost extremity of anguish.—Thus, as all men are, by nature, *full of wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores*, if a Quack in Divinity, ignorant of our disorder, and insensible that our *inward parts are very rottenness*, should only direct us to *the form of godliness*, instead of the *power*, and the *blood of* JESUS CHRIST, which alone *cleanseth from all unrighteousness*, tho' we may *appear beautiful outwardly*, yet the foul venom of an unrenewed heart still lurks within, and through sin, that loathsome disease, we shall perish everlastingly.

But the true Physician will first take *the sword of the Spirit*, and probe the unclean soul—then, *purging* it with *hyssop*, will apply *the* PLANT *of renown*, the LORD JESUS, which is the only balm for every spiritual malady. He knows *the old man of sin*, *which*

which is corrupt, muſt be cut away: And tho' he may put thoſe under his care to ſome *preſent* pain, yet he charitably delivers them from pain *eternal*.

In this manner, my dear friends, have I treated you, ſetting before you the perfect law of GOD, that, conſidering your manifold breaches of it, you might be *pricked to the heart*, and fly to the only *hope that is ſet before you. The law* being *a ſchool-maſter to bring you unto* CHRIST, I have often preached unto you, as from the midſt of the thundrings of mount *Sinai*, that trembling for fear of the *juſt judgments of* GOD, you might *behold the* LAMB *that taketh away the ſins of the world*. And was it not better for you that you ſhould *hear* of hell, and the torments *of* the damned, than *feel* them hereafter.

As I was allowed of GOD *to be put in truſt with the goſpel, even ſo I ſpake, not as pleaſing men, but* GOD, *who triath the hearts*. Had I looked for your applauſe—for *the honour which cometh of men*—like other *falſe Prophets*, I might have ſpoken *ſmooth things* to you, have *propheſied deceits*, and *ſewed pillows under your arm-holes*; but, I truſt, *I have not ſo learned* CHRIST: For thus ſaith my GOD, *There is no peace to the wicked*. Therefore, have I raiſed my voice, *as the ſound of many waters*, while I have been *warning every man* to avoid that burning *Tophet ordained of old* for all the ungodly. Valuing my own eternal welfare, as well as yours, *I could do nothing againſt the truth, but for the truth*: And if, at any time, *I uſed ſharpneſs, it was according to the power which the* LORD *had given me for your edification*. HE, to whom vengeance belongeth (tremble, O my ſoul!) hath thus ſpoken from the habitation of his holineſs—*Son of Man, I have made thee a watchman unto the houſe of Iſrael.*

Israel. When I say unto the wicked, thou shalt surely die, and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his soul, that same wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at THY *hand.* Most solemn threatning! sufficient to shake the most obdurate heart. How then should I save myself and those that heard me? Would not both you and I have fallen into condemnation, *into that pit out of which there is no redemption*; had I not *lifted up my voice like a trumpet, shewing unto Jacob his transgression, and the house of Israel their sins?* Should I not have been damned with you, had I not faithfully declared, *Except ye repent, ye shall all perish?*

Had I taken as much pains to provide for your perishing *bodies* (tho' my care in this respect was not wanting) I should have been *highly esteemed amongst men*; but as my principal aim was to preserve your never-dying *souls*, I was looked upon by many as an over-righteous fool that made much ado about nothing; for, eternal salvation, in this *learned, pious* age, is, of all things, the least attended to. However, *not seeking mine own profit*, but the profit of those committed to my charge, I patiently *endured the contradiction of sinners; if by any means I might save some.*

It must be evident to you all that I *sought not* YOUR's, but YOU—that I *neither coveted any man's silver, or gold, or apparel*, but have given up present advantages, and all future prospects of worldly preferment. And for what, my beloved? That you might be my *crown of rejoicing, in the day of* CHRIST's *appearing and glory*—*That* is the mark I aim at—*that* the glorious prize I fight for: And GOD *is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in*

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the gospel of his SON, that I would rather save one soul, than enjoy the emoluments of the richest Bishoprick.

Perhaps, some of you may say, "If your heart "was thus enlarged towards us, why did you not devote your *whole* time to our service?" Tho' he that asks the question plainly manifests his want of charity for others, yet there is some plausibility in it.—When I considered that *gross darkness covered* most of the priests, as well as the people, my bowels were moved within me, and *the love of* CHRIST *constrained me* (weak as I was) to publish abroad peace and salvation thro' his name: And as GOD abundantly blessed the word, I was the more encouraged to spread the *joyful sound*. As such numbers from every quarter were daily inviting me to preach the words of everlasting life, how could I refuse their pressing entreaties? Were not *their* souls as precious in the sight of GOD as *yours*? Why, then, should they not have been equally dear to me? Was I not at least as active in my Parish as any other curate in the Deanery? Have not many of yourselves declared on oath that the Cure was never so well served, within your memory? What room, then, for complaint? When ye have frequently acknowledged that ye were better fed with the BREAD *of life* by me, than ye ever were before, how cruel was it to let others perish with hunger? Why, oh why were ye so *straitened in your bowels? Was your eye* EVIL *because mine was* GOOD? Why should I not *do what I would with my own* time, when I had any to spare? Now, indeed, PROVIDENCE has kindly left me at my own liberty. As, therefore, there seems to be *a famine of the word of the* LORD, I cannot (consistent with my *present* opinions) confine myself to any particular set of people: And tho' Cures, most advan-

advantageously circumstanced, have been lately proposed to me, yet I could not conscientiously accept them, thinking that GOD had called me to a more public ministration.

Be assured, my beloved, I feel much at parting with you, tho' it may be but for a season, as I intend to pay you many occasional visits. That you may not, however, *be moved away from the hope of the gospel*, let me now beseech you to *hold fast the form of sound words which ye have heard of me*. By the agony and bloody sweat, by the cross and passion of your dying LORD, I solemnly charge you, yea, I adjure you, to *search the scriptures* daily, that you may *not be carried away with every wind of doctrine*. By all that he suffered for you, I earnestly entreat you to seek, and to grow in, *the grace of our* LORD JESUS CHRIST, *the love of* GOD, *and the communion of the* HOLY GHOST.

Remember the words of the Apostle, *By grace we are saved, thro' faith, and* THAT *not of ourselves—it is the gift of* GOD, *not of* WORKS, *lest any man should boast*. The *grace* of the LORD JESUS is the only source from whence all the blessings of the new and everlasting covenant proceed. It was this *grace* which moved him to leave that glory which he had with his FATHER, before the world was—to come down on earth where he *had not to lay his head—to take upon him the form of a servant*—to be *despised and rejected of men*—and, at last, to *give himself for us*, that by his *stripes* we might be *healed*. Freely by this *grace* we are *called with an holy calling—justified from all things*—made *vessels unto honour*, sanctified and meet for the MASTER's use. It is *grace* ingrafts us into CHRIST, *the true Vine*, and *purges* us that we may *bring forth fruit*. By *this* we are

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built upon the ſolid *Foundation, the* LORD JESUS. By *this* we ariſe *a ſpiritual temple*, until *the top-ſtone thereof be brought forth with ſhoutings, crying,* GRACE, GRACE *unto it.*

Proud, ſelf-righteous man, what haſt thou where-of to boaſt? Alas! thy VERY RIGHTEOUSNESSES *are as filthy rags*—thy beſt ſervices, thy moſt holy duties, are an abomination in GOD's ſight. HE will not accept an offering at your hands. *Who* (ſays he) *hath required you to tread my Courts?* Poor worm of the earth, thou haſt *covered thyſelf, but not with a covering of my* SPIRIT, ſaith the LORD. Thou mayeſt ſtrive to hide thy nakedneſs with fig-leaves—but thou art naked ſtill before GOD—thou art not cloathed with the *garments of ſalvation*—He has not *arrayed* thee *in white linen.* Therefore, O *whited ſepulchre*, all thy prayers, thy diligent at-tendance upon ordinances, thy ſecret devotions, are *as the chaff before the wind.* GOD *ſeeth not as man ſeeth*—He regards not thy *outward* ſhew; for WITHIN *thou art full of uncleanneſs.* Thy heart (tho' thou, alas! knoweſt it not) is *the hold of every foul ſpirit—the cage of every unclean and hateful bird.* Pride, luſt, wrath, malice, revenge, inor-dinate affection, emulation and envy, harraſs thy mind by turns; and yet thou fancieſt thyſelf clean. May the LORD open thy blind eyes! *Tho' thou waſh thee with nitre, and take thee much ſoap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, ſaith the* LORD GOD. Thou haſt never received that juſtifying grace wherein believers ſtand. Thou haſt never heard the voice of the FRIEND of ſinners ſaying unto thee "*Thy ſins be forgiven—go in peace—thy* FAITH *hath ſaved thee.*" Thou haſt not yet been waſhed in the *fountain of* CHRIST's blood, *opened for ſin and for uncleanneſs:* And *if I waſh thee not* (ſays He himſelf) *thou haſt no part in me.* Be,

therefore, humbled to the very duſt, conceited mortal—own that *all our ſufficiency is of* GOD, and that *there is none other name*, or thing, *under heaven, whereby we may be ſaved, but only the name of our* LORD JESUS CHRIST. Come to him as a poor wretched Sinner, and conſent to be ſaved by *grace, free grace* alone.

Nay, what is there which even believers have not received? Is not every gift, both ſpiritual and temporal, the emanation of GOD's unmerited grace? Nought have they wherein to glory, but in the LORD JESUS CHRIST, *who, of* GOD, *is made unto them wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption.* Therefore, ye that are *perfect thro' his comelineſs*, ſtill lie as humble ſupplicants at the foot of his croſs, as penſioners on the merits of the crucified JESUS, ſaying, LORD, *thou wilt ordain peace* FOR *us, for* THOU *haſt wrought all our works* IN *us.*

Acknowledging thus the *grace* of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, *the Beloved* SON, reflect alſo upon *the* LOVE *of* GOD THE FATHER, who *was in him reconciling you unto himſelf*; and cry out in theſe paſſionate words of St. *John, Behold what manner of love the* FATHER *hath beſtowed upon us, that we ſhould be called the Sons of* GOD! Well may every believer ſay, *Great is the myſtery* of divine love! What tongue is able to ſet forth its value! What heart that feels it will not be conſtrained to *break forth into ſinging, Praiſe the* LORD, O *my ſoul, and all that is within me bleſs his holy name*; for *his banner over me is love! He ſo loved the world that He gave his only begotten* SON —that SON who was *the expreſs image of his perſon, and the brightneſs of his glory, to become a curſe for us*—to be *numbered among the tranſgreſſors*, that,

that, by his *death*, we *might* have eternal *life*. How *precious* is CHRIST *to them that believe—His favour is better than the life itself.* Who, who can ſufficiently comprehend *the breadth and length, the depth and height* of GOD's redeeming love. It truly *ſurpaſſeth* all human *knowledge.* Even the ſoul that feels it wants language to deſcribe it, and can only adore, in ſilent wonder, the *freeneſs* of the gift, and the goodneſs of the Donor.

The value of this *love* is, alſo, enhanced by its being unchangeable, and eternal, as well as free, and undeſerved. *Not as the world giveth, do I give,* ſays CHRIST. IF *we tranſgreſs not, but abide in his doctrine,* we ſhall *have both the* FATHER *and the* SON, *and* they will *love us unto the end.* It will be *their good pleaſure to give us the kingdom.* O ye *redeemed of the* LORD, ſhould ye not then be ſo raviſhed with GOD's love, as to make him the moſt grateful returns? Should ye not *love* HIM who hath *firſt loved* you? Shall *many waters quench* the divine flame? Will ye not ſay with the firſt Chriſtian champions, *Who, or what ſhall ſeparate us from the love of* CHRIST? *Shall tribulation, or diſtreſs, or perſecution, or famine, or nakedneſs, or peril, or ſword? Nay, in all theſe things we are more than conquerors thro'* HIM *that loved us?*

Now, if we *love him that begetteth,* ſhall we not, alſo, *love him that is begotten of* HIM? Yes—*this is the 2d great commandment, Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thyſelf.* In whatever heart the *love of* GOD *is ſhed abroad, by the* HOLY GHOST *given,* there the divine principle of *brotherly love* always dwells. *Put on, then (as the elect of* GOD) *bowels of mercies, kindneſs, humbleneſs of mind, meekneſs and long-ſuffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, even as* GOD, *for* CHRIST's *ſake, for-*

gave you: And if your *love* thus *covereth all sins—hopeth, believeth, and endureth all things—the communion of the* HOLY GHOST will be with you: The adorable TRINITY will not pay you a tranſient viſit, as *a way-faring man that turneth aſide to tarry only for a night*, but the triune GOD will *dwell in the midſt of you for ever.*

Many falſe prophets are now gone out into the world, who will deny the Inſpiration of the HOLY GHOST, tho', every Sabbath-day, they pray for it, in the public congregation. What dependence, then, can be placed on ſuch Miniſters, as for a livelihood—for *filthy lucre-ſake*—will pray out of a form which they diſapprove of, and condemn in the *pulpit* what they have juſt read in the *Deſk*. Where is their candor, or honeſty? Is not this baſe prevarication? to ſay no worſe. But they may as well affirm, with the fool, "There is no GOD," as ſay, "The SPIRIT is not to be expected in our days." They have as much authority, from ſacred Writ, for the one negation, as for the other. But, why do they thus ſpeak? Becauſe they are *Senſual, not having the* SPIRIT *of* GOD, but *the Spirit that worketh in the children of diſobedience.* Now *ſhall the unbelief* of carnal men *make the word of* GOD *of none effect?* GOD *forbid—let* HIM *be true, and every man a liar.* Therefore, my dearly-beloved in CHRIST, be not ſeduced by them that are bringing in ſuch innovations—ſuch *a damnable hereſy*; but believe the GOD of truth, who hath ſaid, *If any man have not the* SPIRIT *of* CHRIST, *he is none of* HIS—And, if we be not *born again of the* SPIRIT, *we cannot enter into the kingdom of* GOD. Seeing, then, that without this SPIRIT, ye are *ſtrangers to the covenant of promiſe*, oh never reſt ſupplicating GOD, till he *ſends forth the* SPIRIT *of his* SON *into your hearts*,

hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Your *bodies* muſt be made *temples of the* HOLY GHOST—the tabernacles of an in-dwelling GOD. There is ſuch a variety of paſſages in Scripture to prove this, that it would be needleſs to tranſcribe them. Read any one page in the inſpired volume, and you will ſee this ſacred truth blazing forth, like a ſun-beam.

Oh that I could then perſuade you to bow your knees and hearts before GOD, looking up unto HIM for *remiſſion of ſins, and the gift of the* HOLY GHOST! Oh let me earneſtly urge you to pray unto the FATHER *of mercies*, who hath promiſed to ſend the COMFORTER, *even the* SPIRIT *of truth, whom the world cannot receive—becauſe it ſeeth him not, neither knoweth him!* But *they that ſeek ſhall find*—ye ſhould *know* HIM, for HE would *dwell with you*, and *be in you.* Then would ye be enabled to ſay with the believer's in Paul's days, *Now we have received, not the Spirit of the world, but the* SPIRIT *which is of* GOD, *that we might* KNOW *the things that are freely given to us of* GOD. And having the *witneſs in yourſelves* that ye were *children of* GOD, ye would *walk according to* GOD, *in the* SPIRIT—would bring forth all *the peaceable fruits of righteouſneſs*—and boldly confeſs before all men, *We* KNOW *that we* ARE *paſſed from death unto life, and truly our fellowſhip is with the* FATHER *and with his Son* JESUS CHRIST.

As for you, my beloved *Children*, whom, in CHRIST JESUS, *I have begotten thro' the goſpel*, look unto HIM with a ſtedfaſt eye, that as he has been the *Author*, HE may become the *Finiſher of your faith.* Salvation from all ſin is nearer than when ye *firſt believed.* And *as I deſire fruit that may abound to your account, abide in the* LORD JESUS; for, *without me* (ſays HE) *ye can do nothing.*

Being engrafted into HIM, if ye do not daily derive nouriſhment from HIM as the root, whence your fruit muſt ſpring, you will be *caſt aſide* as *withered branches* into everlaſting *burning*—Ye are now the *ſalt of the earth*, that preſerves the maſs of mankind from putrefaction. Oh! take heed, leſt by miſimprovement of your talents, ye loſe your *ſavour*, and be thenceforth *good for nothing but to be caſt out on the Dunghill, and be trodden* even *under the feet of men*; 'till, with the general lump, ye grow *corrupt thro' your fooliſhneſs*. As ye are like *a city that is ſet upon an hill, which cannot be hid*, the eyes of all men will be upon you, *watching for your halting*. Oh let not the wicked ſay, "*There, there—ſo wou'd we have it*"—*Give no occaſion to them that ſeek occaſion*; but keep your *lamps* well *trimmed*, and your *lights* always *burning*, that *whereas they ſpeak againſt you as evil-doers, they may, by your good works which they ſhall behold, glorify* GOD *in the day of viſitation*. Knowing in your own ſouls that ye have not *followed a cunningly-deviſed fable*, hold faſt *faith and a good conſcience*; ſo that if ever I ſhould be permitted to ſee you in the fleſh again, I may come unto you *not with a rod, but in love, and in the ſpirit of meekneſs*. By *adorning the doctrine of* CHRIST *in all things*, give me reaſon to *thank* GOD *on your behalf, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain*. And as ye have hitherto *obeyed my word* (or rather, the word of GOD) *whi e preſent with you, now, much more, in my abſence, work out your ſalvation with fear and trembling*; that ye may be *blameleſs and harmleſs, the Sons* and daughters *of* GOD, *without rebuke in the midſt of a crooked and perverſe generation. For what is my hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the preſence of our* LORD JESUS CHRIST *at his coming? If there be, therefore, any conſolation in* CHRIST, *if any comfort of love, if any fellowſhip of*

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the SPIRIT, *if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy*; that as I have ſown the ſeed, the good word of GOD, it may ſpring up unto eternal life, bearing fruit not only thirty, or ſixty, but an hundred-fold.

But ſhall I, my deareſt friends, after all my unwearied pains with you, ſee any of you, in the laſt tremendous day, at the left hand of CHRIST? Forbid it, thou GOD of mercy and compaſſion! My heart recoils and ſhudders at the thought—And yet how can I hope it will be otherwiſe? May I not adopt the lamentable complaint of the great Apoſtle, *I am afraid of ſome of you, leſt I have beſtowed upon you labour in vain?* And muſt I leave you in your blood and in your ſins—*without hope, or without* GOD *in the world?* Shall any of my flock *be carried away captive*, when the LORD JESUS is willing, is ready to bring them *out of the horrible pit*, into the liberty of HIS children? Oh, what can I do more for you? Could I weep tears of blood to ſave you, I would. But what do I ſay? Is there not blood already ſhed for you, even the precious blood of the LAMB? Look, Sinners, look to Mount Cavalry. See there the panting, bleeding, dying victim—See how the purple flood flows from his hands, his feet, his ſide. Oh catch the healing ſtreams—Will ye let them run in vain? Will ye *count the blood of the covenant an unholy thing*, whereby ye may be *ſanctified*? GOD *is my witneſs that I long after you all in the bowels of* JESUS. *I am* ſtill *jealous over you with a godly jealouſy*. Oh that ye would yet *turn* unto GOD *and live!* Oh that I knew the way to ſteal into your hearts! to ſtrike, to ſoften the flinty rocks! Oh that I could *write* to better purpoſe than I have *ſpoken* to you! Behold! *I have a meſſage from* GOD to you—It concerns your life—your preſent and eternal peace—therefore at the peril of your ſouls, I charge you

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to ſummon all your attention. *O Earth, Earth, Earth, hear ye the word of the* LORD.

'*As I live, ſaith the* LORD GOD, *I have no* 'pleaſure *in the death of the wicked, but that the* 'wicked *turn from his way, and live: Turn ye, turn* 'ye *from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O houſe* 'of *Iſrael?*

What perſuaſive language is here! O Sinner, how canſt thou reſiſt the loving-kindneſs of the LORD, who thus graciouſly condeſcends to invite thee! Haſt thou any relentings? Are thy bowels moved within thee? Has his Spirit taken away thy *heart of ſtone*, and given thee a *heart of fleſh*? I would fain perſuade myſelf that it is thus with thee. Hang, then, upon this welcome news. *There is more joy in the preſence of the angels of* GOD *over one* SINNER *that repenteth, than over ninety and nine* JUST *perſons that need no repentance*, in their own eyes. *Repent* thou, therefore, *and be converted, that thy ſins may be blotted out, when the times of refreſhing ſhall come from the preſence of the* LORD. Let not theſe words riſe up in judgment againſt thee; but embrace now—this moment, embrace the overtures of mercy that GOD has made to thee by me. Oh harden not thy heart! *Lift up the everlaſting doors, and let the* KING *of glory enter in.* Conſider, oh timely conſider thy latter end! The days will come when thou wilt wiſh that thou hadſt taken heed to my council, if thou doſt reject it now. Again I call upon thee, *Put not off thine amendment from day to day—make no long tarrying to turn to the* LORD—*leſt ſuddenly the wrath of the* LORD *come forth, and in thy ſecurity thou be deſtroyed, and periſh in the day of vengeance.* Meditate upon theſe words—ponder them well in thine heart—think upon

upon them day and night, *leſt iniquity prove thy ruin.*

Permit me now to addreſs you all as a congregate body, both high, and low, rich and poor, Sinners and Saints, together.

Should my Succeſſor preach a different doctrine to you from *that which ye have heard of me*, believe *him not—beware* of him—*take heed how ye hear.* Ye ſhall *know by his fruits*, whether he be a true Prophet ſent of GOD. If, therefore, he be a *lover of pleaſure*, he cannot be a *lover of* GOD or of your ſouls. *There be many that would pervert the goſpel of* CHRIST, and that *faith which was once delivered to the ſaints:* But thus ſaith the apoſtle of the Gentiles, (and that twice, to give his advice the greater weight) *Tho' we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other goſpel unto you than that which we have preached, let him be accurſed.* And ſet this down for an undoubted truth, *tho' ye have ten thouſand* INSTRUCTORS *in* CHRIST, *yet have ye not many* FATHERS.

As I truſt to make frequent mention of you, my dearly beloved, in my prayers, ſo I beſeech you, for the LORD JESUS CHRIST's ſake, to ſtrive and wreſtle with GOD for me, that my *going forth from you may be in the fullneſs of the bleſſing of the goſpel of* CHRIST—that *utterance may be given unto me*—that I may *open my mouth boldly, ſpeaking the word of the* LORD *as I ought to ſpeak*—and that *while* I *am preaching to others, I myſelf may not become a caſt-away.*

In ſumming up the whole, I cannot conclude with words more expreſſive than ſome of thoſe which St. Paul uſed to the Elders of the church of Epheſus,

ſus, at his departure from them. Ye know, *from the firſt day I came* among you, *after what manner I have been with you at all ſeaſons; ſerving the* LORD *with many tears, and temptations which befel me by the lying-in-wait of* my enemies; *and how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have taught you publickly, and from houſe to houſe, teſtifying repentance towards* GOD, *and faith towards our* LORD JESUS CHRIST: *And now, behold,* I have *gone* forth *from you, not knowing the things that ſhall befall me; ſave that the* word of GOD *witneſſeth* that if I will *live godly in* CHRIST JESUS, *afflictions abide me. But none of theſe things move me—neither count I my life dear unto myſelf, ſo that I might finiſh my courſe with joy, and the miniſtry which I have received of the* LORD JESUS, *to teſtify the goſpel of the grace of* GOD. It may be that ye, *among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of* GOD, *ſhall ſee my face no more. Wherefore I take you to record this day that I am pure from the blood of all men; for I have not ſhunned to declare unto you all the counſel of* GOD. *Take heed, therefore, unto yourſelves—for I know this, that after my departing, ſhall grievous wolves enter in among you, not ſparing the flock. Alſo, of your own ſelves, ſhall men ariſe, ſpeaking perverſe things, to draw away diſciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember that by the ſpace of three years, I ceaſed not to warn you. And now, Brethren, I commend you to* GOD, *and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them who are ſanctified*—And as St. Paul *kneeled down, and prayed* with the Epheſians, allow me, alſo, to offer up my ſincere petitions for you to the *throne of grace.*

O thou great SHEPHERD *and* BISHOP *of our ſouls,* take this *little flock* whom I have left, into thy care, *and gather them under the ſhadow of thy wings;*

as

as a hen gathereth her brood. Thy *ſheep* are *wandering thro' all the mountains, and upon every high hill—yea, they are ſcattered over all the face of the earth,* and there are none to *ſearch or ſeek after them.* Oh do thou thyſelf *ſearch and ſeek them out.* Deliver them *from all places where they have been diſperſed, in this cloudy and dark day* of Ignorance, and ſpiritual idolatry. *Gather them together from the countries—bring them out from the people to their own land and feed them upon the mountains of Iſrael, by rivers* of comfort, and *wells of ſalvation. Cauſe them to lie down,* and in a *fat paſture* let *their fold be.* Oh let not hirelings *eat it up, and tread it down with their feet.* They are *thruſting with ſide and with ſhoulder, and puſhing all the diſeaſed with their horns* 'till they have *ſcattered them abroad.* They are *feeding themſelves, and not feeding thy flock;* therefore, ſave THOU thy people, that they may be *no more a prey to the heathen,* and that *the Beaſts of the land may not devour them. Cauſe the evil beaſts to ceaſe, that they may dwell ſafely in the wilderneſs, and ſleep in the woods. Gather thy lambs with thine arm, and carry them in thy boſom, and gently lead thoſe that are with young.* They are *periſhing for lack of knowledge*—let *their eyes ſee their Teachers*—Feed them with the *ſincere milk of thy word, that they be no more conſumed with hunger in the land. Make with them a covenant of peace, and cauſe ſhowers of bleſſing* to come down upon them. *Give the early and the latter rain* of thy grace, *in their ſeaſon.* Let the *tree of the field yield her fruit, and the earth her increaſe,* that they may *know they are* the flock of thy paſture, and that Thou art the LORD *their* GOD, from this time forth for ever more. Amen and Amen.

FINIS.

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